



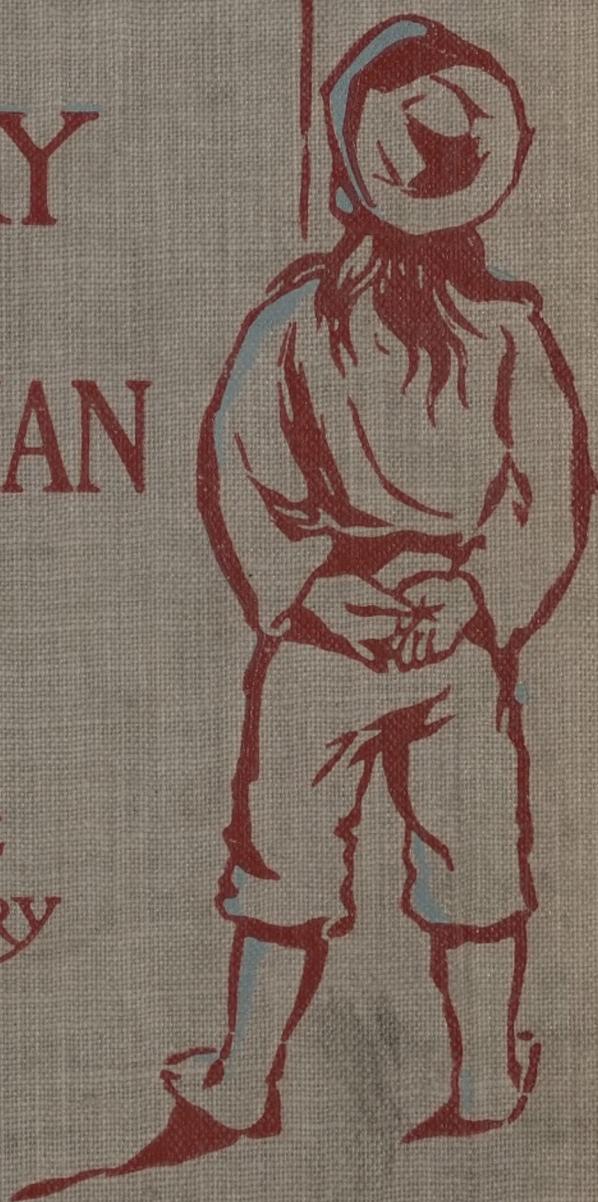
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THE STORY OF A MISSION INDIAN



BOOKS FOR THE
CHILDREN OF MARY



KATHRYN WALLACE



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Books for the Children of Mary

THE STORY OF A MISSION INDIAN

OR

SUNSHINE IN A DARK PLACE

BY

KATHRYN WALLACE



BOSTON : RICHARD G. BADGER

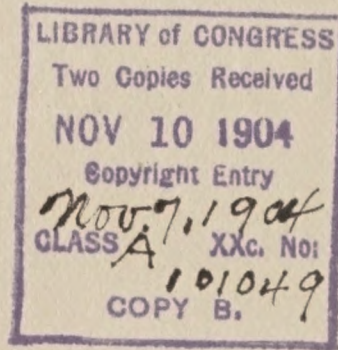
The Gorham Press

1904

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PRINTED AT
THE GORHAM PRESS
BOSTON, U. S. A.

PREFACE

TO teach children any great truth it is important to commence by touching their hearts and sensibilities. This also applies in a measure to the man or woman of mature years. Nothing can be happier than the circumstances given in this little story of how two everyday boys — one a little Indian — should with simple, childlike faith kneel to Mary, the Queen of Heaven, for favors which no earthly being could bring about. When man finds neither sympathy nor consolation among his fellows, he instinctively conjures up the beings of a better world and seeks from them that succor which society either will not or cannot give. Of this we have a remarkable proof in the conduct of the Indians when oppressed by the first Portuguese Viceroys. These unarmed and inoffensive people, finding neither protection nor support from the successor of D'Albuquerque, sat down as suppliants before the tomb of that great man, to demand from the illustrious dead that justice which the living would not

grant either to their rights or their prayers. This is an illustration of how the human heart turns to the spiritual for help and comfort when earthly things fail. With simple, childlike faith the Mission Indians accepted the teachings of the Catholic church, with regard to the beauty, purity, and exalted dignity of the mother of Christ. Everywhere in their humble adobe huts was found an image of Mary bedecked with gaudy trappings. To be sure, their tastes were not always artistic, but it showed their devotion and love for the dear mother. Our little story is about the Mission Indians, telling of the spirit of love and piety in which a little Indian boy addressed the Blessed Mother and how soon his prayer was answered. It makes little difference where we open the record in the history of the American Indian, every page and every year has its dark stain. The story of one tribe is the story of all, varied only by differences in time and place; all point to the greed and injustice of the white man. The Mission Indians (as they were called in California) date back nearly two hundred years, when the Franciscan Fathers came to them armed only with the cruci-



Father Junipero Serra, O S F

1737



PREFACE

v

fix, penetrated the country, winning the love and veneration of the Indians, while the Americans came armed with guns and bayonets, driving away like dogs the Indians who by right were masters of the soil. In 1848, by the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the Mission Indians were made subjects of the United States. At that time they were so far civilized and educated by the Franciscan Fathers that they were the chief dependence of the Mexican and white settlers for all service in or out of doors. These same Mission Indians had built all the houses in the country, planted all the fields and vineyards. Under the supervision of the Franciscan Fathers they were taught all laborious occupations known to civilized society. The intentions of the Mexican government were just and wise towards the Indians, but what shall we say of the United States? In 1830, says the Hon. B. D. Wilson in his report to the Interior, "There were twenty-one missions of the Franciscan Fathers in California and over thirty thousand Indians living comfortable and industrious under the control of the Franciscan Fathers. The vast property and estates of the missions was too

great a temptation for human greed and rapacity, especially in such a time of revolution and misrule. The history of this period is a shameful record of fraud and pillage, of which the poor Indians were the hapless victims. From these cruelties they fled by hundreds, returning to their old wilderness homes. Those who remained in the Pueblos became constantly more and more demoralized, and were subjected to every form of outrage. Whole streets in Los Angeles were full of grog-shops, every Saturday night the town was full of Indians in every stage of intoxication. Then, when helpless and insensible, they were carried to the jails and locked up, and on Monday morning bound out to the highest bidder at the jail gates." These civilized methods of the whites brought to the poor Indian suffering, disease, and vice, which have nearly destroyed a race of men whom historians have said were the very noblest type of all heathen races. The Franciscans had fully demonstrated the capacity of the Indian for the acquisition of civilized habits, their extensive vineyards and large tracts of land had been cultivated solely by Indian labor. By this humane system of

teaching, under the guidance of the Catholic church, many hostile tribes had been subdued without shot or shell, and enabled not only to support themselves, but to render the missions highly profitable establishments. With this evidence before them, how dare the Americans treat the Indians so shamefully? It has been well called "the dishonor of a century." We read in *Harper's Magazine* that "in the year 1837 thirty-one thousand Indians still lingered in peace and plenty, but that very same year Father Saria died of starvation and want as he strove to say mass at the altar of our 'Lady of the Solitude,' where for thirty years he had offered mass. In 1840 at Nome Cult Valley more than two hundred Indians were cruelly slaughtered by the whites. Armed parties went to the ranches in open day, when no evil was apprehended, and shot down the Indians, weak, harmless, and defenseless as they were. After the whites achieved this brave exploit they appealed to the government for aid. During the winter of 1859 a number of Indians were gathered at Humboldt. The whites thought this a favorable time for getting rid of them altogether, so they went in a

body to the Indian camp during the night, when the poor wretches were asleep, shot all, even helpless women and children, on the first onslaught, and then cut the throats of the remainder. Very few escaped alive. There lay the Indian weltering in his blood, telling a tale of horror to the whole civilized world." (The above is taken from *Harper's Magazine* of 1861, page 307.) Oh, shame! shame! that white men should do this thing with impunity in a civilized country, under the eyes of an enlightened government, and under the flag of the so-called brave and free. Even today Americans are driving to utter extermination the Indian race. One asks what right have Americans to criticize the Spaniards in their government of the Eastern or Western Islands?

"Who, we ask, has the true claim to the ownership of North America? The Indian steps noiselessly forward and says, *It is I*; for ages immemorial my fathers fished in these waters, or struck down the game in these undesecrated forests. We conquered and we roamed from the mighty ocean to the mysterious great lakes."

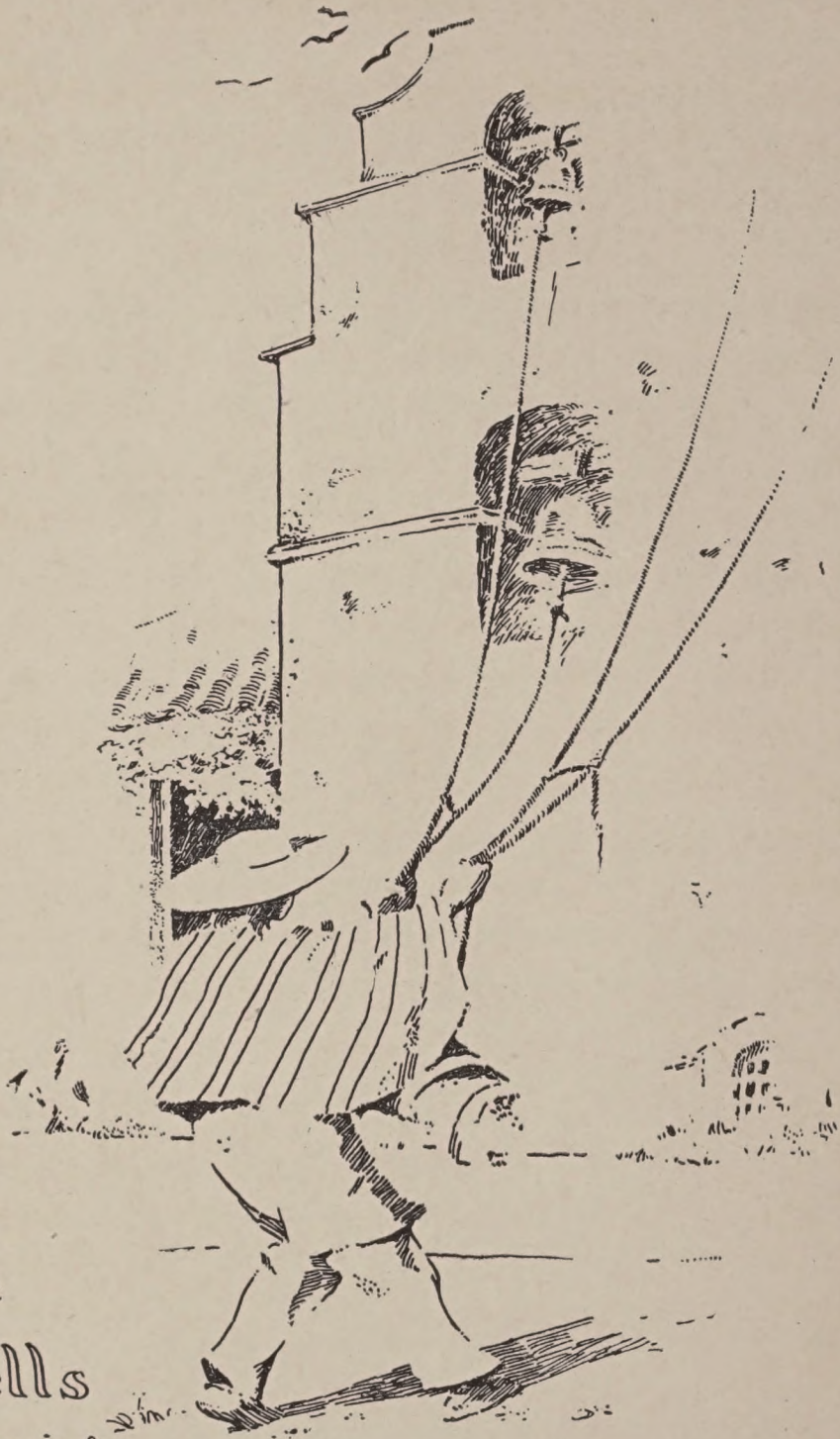
The Indian, without doubt, was the olden Lord of the North American Continent.

Reverence and justice are due the brave and daring red man; we owe him reverence deep and mute as himself, he who is now almost silent. They were, historians tell us, the noblest type of all heathen races, not only brave and daring, but haughty, handsome, and adventurous. Readily they forsook their nomadic life to gather into little villages and live by tillage of the soil and take on, as far as their nature could, the good ways of the white man. They learned to hush the warwhoop and sheath the scalping-knife. The brave Indian will soon be but a memory, and our opportunity to keep faith with him, to be just and generous in our dealings with him, will have passed by forever. It is amazing that we find the same old, old tradition among the Indian race that has forever brought comfort to the children of men, that consoling tradition handed down from father to son — that a virgin's son should come to earth and bring redemption and happiness. One Indian word that expressed their idea of the coming Christ was the word *Messon*, which we love to think of as our own word *Messiah*. The pagan savages called the Catholics *Marians* because of loving and teach-

ing of the Blessed Mother Mary. The Indians were quick to love and honor the name of Mary the mother of Christ, because she was the fulfillment of their beloved tradition. Above all, the Indian women looked up from their debasement to this glorified model of womanhood and besought her followers on earth to teach them the way of perfection. Nor less did the tall warrior swear himself to her service, under the banner of the Catholic missionary. The wisest spoke her praises by the campfires of his tent, the bravest crowned his dusky forehead with stones from Mary's Rosary. The name of California is forever united with the North American Indian — the Mission Indians — as they are now known in history. The Indian and the Franciscan Fathers fill a unique place in the annals of California; the unselfish devotion of the Fathers should be recorded in golden letters, for those who charge the Catholic church with trying to keep natives in ignorance. The Franciscans first came to California in 1596, over three hundred years ago, but today almost every vestige of both Franciscan and Indian have disappeared, except the mission churches, which alone

survive as monuments to a departed race. The churches remain as a lasting memento of the good Franciscan Fathers, the noblest band of men that has graced the pages of modern history. When Governor Enchandia gave orders for the secularization of the missions, it meant nakedness, savagery, and starvation for the Indian. All historians agree that Governor Alvarado's rule from 1836 to 1842 was a period of plunder and ruin in the Mission Indian history. The methods of the mission spoliation was: The Governor gave orders that the wheat, grain, tallow, hides, etc., — all products of the thrifty missions — should be used as public revenue, for public services. In other words, he robbed the Indian for private gain. Under the rule of Alvarado, and the mission robbers, and during the subsequent war between Mexico and the States, the soldiers did pretty much as they pleased; the times were rife with murder and pillage. In 1844 Governor Pico tried to make secularization of the missions complete by selling and leasing them to private parties. At last the United States Supreme Court decided that Pico had no right to sell the mission property. Right-minded men now sigh

for the beneficial management of the Franciscan Fathers. The missions have been abolished and the Indians who were left to the enlightened men of our day have passed away like smoke before the wind. In 1834 there came a thunderbolt that smote the tried mission system, till it shook and fell a shattered fabric. It came in the form of a decree that the missions were to be snatched from the jurisdiction of the Franciscan Fathers and transferred just as they stood into the hands of the government. Commissionados were despatched to the missions to assume charge. The Indians took to the mountains, returned to their barbarous ways, or became outcasts. The Indian, without his good priest to control him, disappeared and simply followed his animal instincts. Almost every vestige of the Indian is gone. The greedy whites have taken possession of what by right and justice belongs to the *Indian*.



The
Bells
of
Old SAN Gabriel

THE OLD MISSION BELLS OF CALIFORNIA

*Up on the grand Sierras the shadows come and go,
And the bells of old San Gabriel are ringing here below.
In the footsteps of the padres we pause, and faintly
trace*

*Their footprints in the valley, as they went from place
to place.*

*We see the saintly Serra, tired and worn and pale,
Treading the narrow pathway, on the old Mission trail.
Unmindful of the shadows, or of the noonday heat,
He plods along the valley oft wounding weary feet.
And the mystic night comes stealing as the padre wends
his way;*

*A warm dusk hides the valley, the mountain peaks are
gray.*

*We pause, to gaze for a little space over this hallowed,
sacred place;*

*And the bells ring out, as the sun goes down, over the
foothills bare and brown.*

*The crimson flush has faded from Sierra's massive brow,
And the sweet tones of the Angelus are softly ringing
now.*

*We recall the days of romance, of Spanish song and tale,
As the bells of old San Gabriel ring out across the vale.
We see the gay señora and Spanish maiden fair,
And the haughty señorita, with blossoms in her hair,
And sweeping down the hillside comes a stately caval-
cade.*

*The air is filled with perfume, as the orange blossoms
fade,*

*And the bells' sweet, mystic music floats in from the
silent past,*

*And in the twilight shadows blends softly with the
blast.*

*The radiant light has vanished over the mountains gray;
And the bells of old San Gabriel toll out the parting
day.*

NOTE.—San Gabriel Mission lies 10 miles east of Los Angeles, Cal. It was founded on Sept. 8, 1771, by a party consisting of Rev. Anzel Somera and Rev. Pedro Cambon, with a guard of ten soldiers — this was some years before the Revolutionary War. It is a most picturesque old place. It reminds us of the activity and watchfulness of the Catholic Church in spreading the Gospel everywhere on earth. The belfry was constructed for six bells, but for over 30 years there have been but four in place. The famous Padre Junipero Serra paid his last visit to San Gabriel Sept. 17, 1784. He then administered confirmation. At that time there had been over a thousand Indians converted and baptized. Padre Dumitz, the last of Serra's companions, died at San Gabriel Jan. 14, 1811, and was buried within the church as a precaution against the wild Indians, who were said to number at that time over 5,000. It is not recorded that they attacked the Mission, though they were known to be unfriendly. These old mission churches alone tell of deeds "heroically bold," and of the power of the Cross to send timid men into the midst of unknown dangers. In 1812 an earthquake threw down the tower and overturned the main altar, destroying the walls of the northeast corner. In 1817 San Gabriel had a population of 2,000 Catholic Indians; then came secularization, and the poor Indians fled to their mountain homes or became outcasts. Everything at the missions went wrong. The Indians were scattered and their property wasted. At this the Indians became discouraged, and returned to their original condition. The church of San Gabriel is well preserved. The foundation and walls were built of stone and mortar. The mortar used was of such excellent quality that the building is almost as strong as if hewn out of solid rock. When, in 1886, the windows were enlarged, it was with the greatest difficulty that the work was done. The altar is old and quaint and adorned

with life-size statues of St. Francis Assisi and St. Joachim. In the centre is a statue of the Angel Gabriel, to whom the church is dedicated; also a statue of the Blessed Virgin. On the Epistle and Gospel sides are St. Dominic and St. Anthony of Padua. Under the organ loft is an old confessional, said to antedate the church. It is interesting on account of its odd workmanship and antiquity. The interior walls are decorated with life-size oil paintings of the apostles and saints. They are very old and in an excellent state of preservation. The old baptismal font, of hammered brass, is unique as a fine piece of work. It is supposed to have been brought from Spain. In the sacristy, besides old statuary, there are censers and other church vessels of copper, apparently the same age and workmanship as the baptismal font. San Gabriel Church, though not the largest in California, is certainly the most celebrated and one of the best preserved. That it has not gone to ruin is because of the excellence of the building. On account of its nearness to Los Angeles it is visited by thousands of tourists. Enterprising visitors whittled and partially carried away the old doors. They had to be replaced by nineteenth century doors. The historic belfry, with its chime of bells, was the inspiration of the above poem.

THE STORY OF A MISSION INDIAN;
OR
SUNSHINE IN A DARK PLACE

*“ Knowest thou the land where the lemon
trees bloom?
Where the golden orange grows, in the
deep thicket’s gloom?
Where a wind ever soft from the blue
heaven blows,
And the groves are of laurel, and myrtle,
and rose? ”*

UP on the tree-top a bluebird is singing so loud and sweet that we wonder how so much melody comes from one small throat. The notes of the little songster ring out through the forest trees that rise in scattered groves on the southern slope of the Sierra Madre. A little Indian boy, with his broad sombrero and red neckscarf, with bronzed face and twinkling brown eyes, stands shaking his pointed sombrero at the bird up on the tree. He whistles, and the little singer twitters an answer back. A big

shaggy dog dashes through the underbrush and seems to catch the boy's thoughts, for he, too, stops and watches the bird, looking up and barking cheerily. Then he bounds off, leaping and gamboling as merrily as the birds who are twittering and hopping about on the topmost branches of the trees. Shortly we see them again, on the old Indian trail, going towards the town of Juan Capistrano. They stop at the ruins of an old adobe hut, and the boy is carefully watching the cliff swallows, a most industrious bird, who builds its six-inch nest in a few days in a way somewhat different from other birds, with one side flat against the wall. Antonio, our little Indian hero, has a great love for birds, and knows the habits and songs of most all the birds of his neighborhood. The boy and his faithful dog are the very best of friends, and both often stop on their way to watch the bright birds as they fly from bough to bough, twittering and singing among the redwoods. All save the eagle, so big and powerful, who flaps his great wings, hovering in the air, while calling to his mate. The eagle never came near enough for Antonio to very closely watch him; indeed, he was so big and large that



A Little
INDIAN Boy

the boy would rather he kept at a safe distance. The little town, Juan Capistrano, toward which Antonio is walking, lies in a fair and smiling country. West are the rolling waters of the blue Pacific Ocean; east tower the grand old Sierras. As far as eye can reach there is a golden abundance. Fruit is ripe in the orchard; rosy-cheeked apples and brown pears hang on the trees; plums and apricots shine in green leaves. Orange and lemon trees lie in endless rows before us; farther away the corn stands in thick sheaves, and the meadows are full of busy men. The very air is redolent of peace and plenty. The whole country seems to be a veritable haven of rest. Here lies the land as it looked when Father Junipero Serra used to pace its length from San Diego to Monterey. The picture is incomparable as we gaze on the blue mountains and far-away sea. The mocking-bird pipes his full, richly-varied strains, and the air is vocal with the songs of many birds. The vines of white lamarch and roses climb over the houses, until the very gables nestle in bowers of flowers, a riot of color that is a wonder and a joy. The eucalyptus trees, tall and graceful, form high colonnades be-

tween which the brilliant sunshine streams. Dear old Capistrano! it is full of the atmosphere of romance, and the poetry of a pastoral people, linked by the ties of inheritance and association with the history of bygone days. In the veins of its inhabitants flows the blood of Mission soldier and Mission Indian. Here are pedigrees worth disentangling, and stories enough to stock a library. Its broken olive mill and crumbling dovecote, and the spacious weed-grown courts and corridors are pathetic witnesses of the grandeur of the plans and purposes of the Mission Fathers, and also of the rapidity with which nature effaces the noblest work of human hands. Juan Capistrano is teeming with historical associations; it is surrounded by tokens of that strange old life which is now so completely a thing of the past. Centuries ago the Indian lived and hunted here, and passed his days in peace and serenity. It is now high noon; sweet and thrilling over the hills and through the valley comes the sound of the Angelus bell from the old mission church, ringing loud and clear thro' the summer air, telling to the world of men that wonder of wonders: "The Word made flesh that

dwelt among us." It is a reminder of the old Catholic days of California, before greed and lust of gold devastated that beautiful country, when the Indians and the Franciscan Fathers lived side by side in peace, abundance, and happiness. All down the coast, from Santa Barbara to San Diego, was once peopled by peaceable Catholic Indians. It was a wonderful power which the Mission Fathers acquired over the Indians. With but a handful of soldiers they gained mastery over many tribes, inducing them to live about the missions, teaching them all useful occupations, and persuading them to accept the religion of Christ, many of them becoming faithful Catholics. What a difference between the conquest of the Mission Fathers and the conquests of the American soldiers. The Fathers came armed only with the crucifix, while the Americans came with guns and bayonets. The founding and developing of the California missions constitutes an episode unique in history. The suffering and hardships of Father Junipero Serra and his fellow toilers will be a lesson fraught with meaning as long as men suffer and yearn for better things. The labor of build-

ing the churches and cloisters, with no material at hand, and with only the rudest of tools, with unskilled workmen, surrounded by hostile savages, seems little less than miraculous. Ruined and crumbling to decay as the old mission churches are, they form some of the most noteworthy architecture in America. There is a softness of harmony about the lines of these old missions that shows the work of loving hands instead of machines. Fifty years after the establishment of the first mission a chain of twenty-one churches dotted the coast valleys, each within an easy day's journey of the next. The Indians of the missions were devout Catholics, living under strict ecclesiastical rule and carrying on faithfully the manifold occupations imposed upon them. The power of the missions is gone and seemingly the poor Indian with them. The buildings are rapidly crumbling into dust. "But about them still clings an atmosphere of romance and poetry, a melancholy peace which is sad yet beautiful and fascinating." The settling up of the country by Americans has changed the whole face of nature. The greedy whites have driven the Indians away from their homes like dogs. In a few

generations the old American Indian will be but a memory, and the opportunity to keep faith with him, to be just and generous in our dealings with him, will have passed by forever. The treachery and injustice of the whites to the poor Indians is something we Americans should blush to recall.

At last it looked as if Divine Providence interfered and the country was shaken by a terrible earthquake; houses rocked to and fro, cracked and fell to ruin; the atmosphere was filled with fine dust that was stifling. Steeples and churches swung like trees in a storm. The mighty ocean rolled and roared like an angry God, and the waters of the rivers ran as yellow as sulphur. The bells of the church of San Luis Rey rang out as if by some invisible hand. The walls of the churches split, crumbled, and fell to ruin. Half of the neighboring orchards and vineyards were destroyed. The whisky traders to the Indians were well shaken and badly frightened, too; the butchers of men who had slaughtered the Indians thought their last days had come. Ruins of this earthquake are yet to be seen at Juan Capistrano and other places. The comfortable ranch where our little Indian hero An-

tonio Cavai lived was once a part of the princely possessions of the old Mexican family De Rocha. A tract of some one hundred acres had been purchased several years before our story opens by Cornelius O'Donovan, an Irish gentleman of good birth and breeding, who, with his amiable and intelligent wife, had made their home here in California a perfect little paradise. Their house still stands embowered by the vegetation of years, a lovely old home with its patio, where in the shade of the porch the cage of the mocking-bird still hangs and the nightingale sings among the roses. Mrs. O'Donovan was known to the whole countryside for her generous heart and many charities. She was familiarly known to all her friends by the title of "Aunt Mary," and a loving, kind woman she was to all who came within the radius of her happy life. Some years before our story opens, the good woman had lost both her husband and her only child by a fever that devastated the country. Being alone in the world, she adopted as her son a little Indian boy named Antonio Cavai, whom we have already met on the road with his dog. He was the very brightest little fellow in all the countryside;



A Way-side
Shrine

although only ten years old, he was known for miles around as a boy of sterling character.

Antonio was born in the Saboba village, which was not far from Aunt Mary's ranch. The village was peopled principally by Indians and half-breeds. Antonio Cavai's father was an educated man and captain of the village; he was looked up to by the Indians and much respected by the whites. Little Antonio boasted that his father had once written a letter to the President of the United States. We may well forgive Antonio for boasting — many a white boy might be proud of the same. And this letter was to ask the Great Father of our country to help his tribe to keep the little patches of land which their labor and industry had made profitable.

A scheming land-grabber, under the protection of the government, had driven the poor Indians out of the village under the point of the bayonet. The little village had been made a habitable place through the industry of the whole tribe. The Indians, though what the white man calls ignorant, rebelled in their own way against this injustice. Antonio Cavai, the Indian chief,

fought bravely for his rights, and at last died from the effects of wounds received in his encounter with the whites. As death was closing in upon him, he raised his dying eyes to his son, telling him there was a just God, and some day Antonio would have the justice that was denied to his father, and the Indian would some time enjoy that equality and fraternity that is meant by the brotherhood of man. The Indian chief had been a power among his people, and died as he had lived, a just and honorable man. Antonio had inherited the manly qualities of his father, and was a boy loved and respected by all who came in contact with him. The Indian boy had in his nature the love of the woods, the flowers, and the birds; he never tired talking about them. In him there was no shadow of fear; he delighted in doing things dangerous; he loved to display his strength and agility. He was not only an apt scholar, but a devout little Catholic, too. The workmen on Aunt Mary's ranch were one and all Antonio's fast friends, and would go many a mile to oblige the kind and willing lad. His home with Aunt Mary was altogether a very happy place, and with his dog Pedro no happier

boy could be found. You may be sure that Antonio was good to his dog, for Aunt Mary had taught him cruelty to animals was a contemptible thing in man or boy. Cardinal Newman has left us this bit of wisdom about the dumb creation: "Can anything be more marvelous or startling, unless we were used to it, than that we would have a race of beings around us, whom we do but see, and as little know their state or can describe their interests or their destiny as we can tell of the inhabitants of the moon? It is a very overpowering thought when we fix our minds upon it. They are more powerful than man, and yet are his slaves. All is mystery about them." The whole dumb creation is a wonder and a surprise to us. Why should we use our higher intelligence by being cruel? It is a pitiful thing to see a strong man or boy beating or starving a poor dumb animal. Antonio was so careful in his treatment of animals that many of them on the ranch knew him by his voice, because the kindliness of his gentle heart went out to them in kind and considerate treatment. Thus love and kindness to animals led to a great good fortune in Antonio's life, as you shall hear. He was not the

kind of a boy to treat cruelly or unkindly any of God's creatures. You remember that pretty poem by Coleridge:

*“ He prayeth well who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast;
He prayeth best who loveth best
All things both great and small,
For the dear God, who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.”*

II

OUT in the busy fields the tired workmen have now quit work for their midday lunch. The workers are most of them half-breeds, with some Indians and some whites. As they file through the fertile fields they pass a little grotto, or wayside shrine, fitted into the side of a hill, with overhanging vines and flowers, wherein is a statue of our Blessed Mother with the dear Christ in her arms. This is Aunt Mary's beloved shrine. It is a pretty spot, with its vines and blossoms and flowers. As the men pass the little grotto many of them raise their hats, and one alone kneels to say a little prayer, and he is an Indian. This tells the tale that Catholicity is not quite dead, though it has been crushed to earth. On they go past the old church of Juan Capistrano, where the Franciscan Fathers still live, though most of their old church is now a picturesque ruin. It seems strange in these fast rushing days of steam and trolley that such an evidence of bygone days should still stand there to remind the aggressive American that this was once a

Catholic country, peopled by peaceful, industrious, and devout Indians, free from discords and strife. As one gazes at this picturesque old church we wonder what could have been the comings and goings of the people who prayed and worshiped there in the long ago. Our little Indian hero Antonio had been carefully taught by Aunt Mary to ask our Blessed Mother for daily guidance, and indeed he was a good and devoted child of Mary. He was often found praying before the statue in the grove, and no amount of scoffing ever turned Antonio from his devotion to our Blessed Mother. And the time came when she fully repaid him for all his childish faith and confidence in her. Quite near the little wayside shrine where Antonio went so often to pray, up on the top of a soft rounded hill which made the beautiful rolling sides of that part of the valley, there had been erected, in the old Catholic days, a large wooden cross; it could be plainly seen at every turn of the road. There it stood, summer and winter, rain or shine, like a sentinel, silent and solemn, with outstretched arms. In the past it must have been a landmark to many a guileless traveler, and who shall say that the cross

did not bear a message of hope to many an idle heart journeying by? Certain it is that good Catholics crossed themselves when they first beheld it in this lonely place. The inroads of greedy speculators have destroyed many of the old landmarks which were distinctly Catholic. In the early days of the Mission Fathers, in the smiling seaside hills, and in the fertile valleys of the Sierras, humble little shrines were raised to the Madonna. These little wayside altars, shaded with network of ivy and green, told of the Indians' love of the Virgin Mother. This devotion, so fresh and simple, so appropriate to the gentle and quiet habits of the Indian, helped to fashion the ways and manners of that once savage race. There is a legend of a lost statue of the Virgin being found by Indians, after long and fruitless searching, by a train of radiant light, illuminating the night, and concentrating its rays on the same spot where the statue had been concealed by the Franciscan Fathers on a night of fear and flight when the sacrilegious United States troops had taken possession of their church and made military barracks of it. It was told among the Indians that over this spot flocks of beautiful

singing birds hovered days and days (which might have been angels for aught they knew). They found the image hidden under a thorny shrub that blossomed nowhere but there, and the blossoms were redolent with perfumes of the wildwood. The oldest inhabitant tells the tale that this same thorny shrub was ever in riotous blossom the whole year round. The Indians loved the Blessed Mother, and devotion to her was very marked among them. Antonio Cavai had the greatest faith in the Virgin Mother; many a prayer went up to heaven from the loving, innocent heart of this little Indian boy.

III

A BOY'S shrill whistle pierces the air and echoes back from the hills. "Hi! Hi there! Pedro! Whoo! Oo! O!" — and a brown shaggy dog comes racing down the road. He dances and leaps, now here, now there; he jumps on Antonio's shoulder and whisks about his feet; then he stands still, with the most knowing kind of a look in his intelligent eyes. Pedro's eyes almost spoke. There he stood looking at Antonio, almost saying: "What's the matter? What do you want with me?" "Hurrah! Hurrah!" cried out the lusty voice of Antonio, "we're going a-fishing with Jack Hart. Look sharp there, Pedro!" The dog did not wait for another word, but dashed off like a flash. Who can say that Pedro did not understand? He surely did, for when Antonio got up to the shed where he kept his bait and fishing tackle there stood the dog vigorously wagging his tail and saying, as well as a dog could say it, "I am ready." Antonio laughed in merry, guileless fashion at the dog, for the poor creature almost shook his tail off in his efforts to express his

pleasure. As the boy and dog walked up the garden path leading to the house they found dear Aunt Mary had a fine lunch fixed up, so dainty and nice, in a little basket. Pedro ran before, then behind, and around and around, barking as merrily as could be. The basket is placed in the happy dog's mouth, and he carries it with great care, and prances off with his head high in the air, as became a dog on such an important mission. Aunt Mary stands on the porch looking at them, with her kind, wholesome face melting into a pleasant smile. "I have some broth," said she, "in this little pail for Gran'ma Hart. You know, Antonio, she has been ill, and you must go a little out of your way to bring it to her." "All right!" chirped up the bright boy. "You never forget anybody, Auntie. I am so glad to bring it to Gran'ma Hart. The last time I brought her some she said there was nothing tasted so good as your broth." Aunt Mary laughs cheerily at this.

So off they gaily start on their fishing trip, Antonio, with his fishing rod slung over his shoulder, whistling as only a happy boy can whistle. Pedro skipped along with a racing air and seemed to realize that he

was an important factor in the expedition. Antonio talked to his dog as if he could talk too; he talked of the rabbits with their self-betraying tails that scudded in and out of the brush — and there were armies of them; of the squirrels that frisked and frolicked in the trees; of the merry birds of bright and beautiful plumage that sailed above their heads. “Hi there, Pedro! what are you about?” cried Antonio. Pedro forgot he had the lunch basket in his mouth and started after a rabbit as if the speed of a rabbit was the most important thing in life. Over went the basket and out fell the glass jar filled with nice fresh tea of Aunt Mary’s own making, but, thanks to the careful way things were fixed, the jar and the goodies were safely replaced and no harm done. Pedro returned with a kind of a hang-dog look; he knew he had made a mistake, but, like the wise dog he was, he took up his basket again and soberly started off, without even a bark; his head stiff and erect just like a patrolman, looking neither right nor left, but straight ahead. There is no little boy or girl but will say that Pedro was right this time. Just then there was heard a boy’s whistle, sounding like the echo of

some happy thought, and then came a wild hurrah from Jack Hart, who had come up the road to meet them. "Hello, Antonio," shouted the lusty voice of Jack. Pedro, like the friendly dog that he was, made another break when he saw Jack, and was about to make a dash of welcome at him, but oh, the wisdom of that same dog! he stopped just in time to save the lunch basket. This made Antonio remember Gran'ma Hart's broth in the little pail. Poor old gran'ma was sitting alone in the open door. "Ah!" said she, in the wheeziest kind of a voice, "it is so good of your auntie to remember an old woman like me. She is always thinking of others and doing for others. She surely lives that 'golden rule' that has been talked so much about and preached about but very seldom lived. Do not fail to stop here, Antonio, on your way back from fishing, as I have some flowers to send up to Our Lady's shrine. You know tomorrow is one of her feast days, and I want the flowers to deck her altar." "I won't forget, gran'ma," said the happy boy; "we will stop and bring you some of our big fish." So off go the merry boys, after giving gran'ma a cheery good-by.

There was the sun shining and the birds singing, as the sun only shines and the birds only sing when boys are off on a frolic. It took the jolly boys but a short time to get to the water. They give a wild hurrah as they catch the salt sea smell and hear the cry of the gull. They startle the lone fisherman off on the rocks. "The mana that catcha the fisha" is not inclined to be sociable with the boys, so they leave him "alone in his glory." Small boats are dancing merrily over the water. Off in the distance is seen the smoke of the San Francisco boats and steamers on the way to San Diego. The water is blue and peaceful, and the boys are happy. Not far from the shore they see a school of flying king-fish skimming over the water with the lightness of a bird. This is a treat, for the boys do not often see the king-fish so near land. It is not very long before Antonio and Jack are ready with handline and rod, and soon they land small yellow-tails and rock-bass. Schools of tiny fish glide back and forth near the rocks, but they are too cute to be caught. Floating jelly-fish and sprawling star-fish sweep upon the beach with the blue and green sea-weed. And the rocks are

alive with strange little creatures of the deep. Standing on the rocks with the gulls wheeling above, and the pelican and cormorant winging their way far out to sea, and the fresh salt air, with the splash of the waves in their faces, the boys were filled with joy so contagious that Pedro partook of their joy and gladness by jumping into the water and then out of the water. Such fun and sport as they had! Pedro was indeed no small part of the fun. When he jumped in the water there was a fresh burst of merriment from the boys; when he jumps out there is another peal of merry laughter. Then he runs off to play with the Mother Carey chickens that live in crowds along the beach; he frisked and played with the fish that lay on the shore to dry, and was the very jolliest dog in the world. The louder the boys laughed and shouted, the more Pedro leaped and jumped and barked. Never were there happier companions and never was more fun squeezed into a shorter space of time. "Come, Pedro, and hustle there; we are going home." "Oh, oh," sang out Jack, "we won't go home until morning." At this the dog redoubles his barking and his gambols. And, like the



On the
Rocks

W. B. W.

high-minded dog that he was, he galloped after them joyfully. Jolly dogs are a good deal like happy boys, they love to make a noise and romp and tear around. Off they go, so bravely, on their way home. This was a fishing trip the boys would never forget. Presently we hear two lusty young voices singing an old melody as they and the dog trot merrily along.

Song: *The sky is blue, the waters too,
La-loo-la-loo!
Here's to you — and my dog too,
La-loo-la-loo!*

IV

THE blue waters of the Pacific Ocean lie peaceful and tranquil, and the setting sun is throwing a radiance of glorious beauty all over nature as the boys and Pedro start home from their fishing. Antonio and Jack were startled, and looked with wonder, and indeed with terror, as they saw a coal-black horse, with dilated nostrils and flashing eye, dash madly through the open brush. The boys huddled together near the hedge, to get out of the way of the riderless horse. He was a noble animal of that new breed that was just finding its way into California from the ports of the southern shore. The horse dashes rapidly by and is lost in the distance. So few horsemen pass that way that the boys are alarmed, and hasten to look for the rider. No human being was in sight, so the boys forgot very speedily the incident and went on their way home. As they pass over the railroad beyond the bluff, they see men in the brush shooting rabbits, which was nothing unusual. Pedro started off in his merry fashion to see the sport. Soon there

was the sharp report of a rifle. Just at that instant Antonio Cavai was frightened nearly out of his senses by the loud bark of Pedro. Then came the shrill cry of a wounded animal, and, whether by accident or what, poor Pedro was shot in the leg, and a bad shot it was, too. When Antonio saw what was done he upbraided the man for his cruelty. The boys never forgot the brutal reply of the man, who called the dog an old cur and other ugly names. He was a white man talking to a little Indian boy, who might have taught the man many a useful lesson. It is strange to detect the savage in civilized man and to observe the hold of some savage traits on men who are boastful of their superiority. The poor dog could not stir, and lay moaning helplessly. It was nearing sundown and the sky was cloudless, but the sun was slowly creeping down towards the mountains, which made a ragged edge of the horizon, and the foothills were already deeply shadowed by the first touch of twilight.

Around them on every side stretched the wide open country, wrapped in sunshine and in silence. The boys looked sadly away towards the mountains which lay passive

* and serene, and thought God had forgotten them. The suffering dog lay there in the gathering gloom, moaning pitifully. The blackbirds were beginning their evening songs in their roosting places among the cottonwoods. The meadow lark by the roadside sounds its loud, sweet, flutelike call; all else is silence. The air was so still that one longed for some sound to relieve the tension. Then the boys heard a little low wail or moan, which seemed to be the wind in the sage-brush. Then a robin sounded a loud cheery note. A butterfly fluttered past on noiseless wings, and the two little boys were bitterly weeping. The men had gone off and left them alone in what was a wilderness; no house within sight and no way of getting home. "I would not let you suffer, Pedro, if I could help it," said Antonio, with a great sob in his throat. "Be a good dog and we will get you home as soon as we can." Pedro feebly wagged his tail when he saw his little friends standing over him. "I never thought," said Jack Hart, "that I could feel so bad about a dog. Oh, oh! Whatever will we do?" They tied up the wounded leg, from which the blood was freely flowing, with their handkerchiefs,

and tried as best they could to relieve the poor dog, who was suffering great pain. The two boys were distracted and grew quite helpless in their sorrow. They were so far from home and no way of getting help, and Pedro could not even stand. "Oh, my," said Antonio, "what shall we do? What shall we do? It will soon be dark night. Poor Pedro; I know he will die. If we were only home Aunt Mary would cure him, I know she would." The kind boy patted the suffering dog's head, but despaired of ever getting him home alive. "Antonio," said Jack, with a great choking sob, "no one in the world can hear or help us; let us pray to our Blessed Mother. Gran'ma says she always helps us when no one else will." "Oh, yes," said Antonio, "why did I not think of that myself? You say the prayer, Antonio, and I will join you." The two weeping boys knelt and prayed with an earnestness they never before felt. There in the still woods, and in the silence of the summer day, they raised their eyes to Heaven; clasping their little hands, they prayed aloud to the Queen of Heaven: "*Dear Mother Mary! we don't know whether dogs go to Heaven*

or not. We would be happier if we were sure they did. We pray thee help poor Pedro. Let him live and we will be so thankful. Show us what to do, dear, dear Mother. Pedro was always such a good dog. Amen, amen."

The boys had just arisen from their knees when the thought came to Antonio that by going over to the wagon road he might hail some stray ranchman on his way home from town, and so take Pedro and themselves back home. There was not much time to spare before dark, as the sun had begun to set, and looked like a great ball of fire, falling into the blue waters of the Pacific. Antonio ran over to the wagon road, but to his sorrow no one was in sight. Coming back to the brush near where Pedro lay moaning, he was startled by seeing a man lying in the brush, with disheveled hair, and a face that wore the pallor of death. The man had a different look from the many tramps that Antonio had seen on their way from Los Angeles to San Diego. If he was a tramp he was not an ordinary one. As Antonio approached, the man called out to him in a voice weak and faint, "Give me a drink, little boy; for the love of God, give me a



Jack and Pedro

drink. I am dying, I fear." The frightened child glanced at the man in quick surprise. "Give me a drink," again cries the man, "for God's sake!" It took but a few moments for the kind-hearted boy to run to the lunch basket and take out the jar of tea, which had not been opened by the boys. The tea was quickly swallowed by the thirsty man. "Dear child," said he, "that drink was life to me. I have lain here I know not how long, dying for a drink; not able to stand on my feet. I heard your prayer, my boy; you are a kind and pitiful lad. O God, help me! I am drifting, I know not whither. Have you seen my horse, boys? He took fright at the cars and threw me violently to the ground. Have you seen the horse?" "We have been watching our poor dog," said the boys, "but we will find your horse by and by." "Let me raise your head?" said the thoughtful Indian boy, and, taking off his jacket, Antonio placed it comfortably under the man's head. "It is too bad you are so far from Aunt Mary's ranch. She is so good and kind. She would help you, I know. Oh, dear, if we were only there, Pedro would be all right, too." What was the boys' delight when they heard the

rumbling sound of horses and a wagon, and there to be sure was Fred Fisher, their neighbor, coming down the road with his team of two horses. He gladly stopped to give them a lift. When Antonio told of the sick man in the brush, Fred, who was a kind-hearted man, would not leave the stranger sick and alone by the wayside. After some persuasion the sick man was induced to take a seat in the wagon. After getting Pedro comfortable on the wagon floor they started for home. It was not long before Aunt Mary's cheerful little home came into view. She had been anxiously watching for them, as Pedro's accident had delayed them some hours behind time. When Aunt Mary's kind, motherly eyes rested on the stranger she saw that he was a very sick man, for his face looked like death. She would not hear of his passing her house with no place to shelter him. He was brought in to a clean, comfortable bed, and was almost helpless with pain. Whispering to Aunt Mary, he said: "Good woman, you may regret this; I am a stranger, and perchance an enemy of yours." "Hush!" said Aunt Mary, "Do you not remember the Saviour's words, 'In-as-much as you have done it unto the least

of these my brethren, you have done it unto me '? You are needy; that is your passport to my house. God sent you here."

V

AUNT MARY had carefully bandaged and strapped poor Pedro's leg, and, after a good deal of care and nursing, he was soon sleeping the "sleep of the just." It was not long before he was well. But the poor dog carried the mark to his grave of man's inhumanity, for his leg was shortened and made him limp and hop, so that he was always quite lame. Like the good dog that he was, he tried to forget it, and always seemed happy. It was surprising to see how quickly the dog responded to the care that loving hands had given him. Dear, true, faithful Pedro! How he barked and romped and played, telling in every way that a dog could that he was grateful for what had been done for him. When Antonio tells Aunt Mary of his little prayer to our Lady, and how soon it was answered, she clasps the little boy in her loving arms and tells him that he is a boy after her own heart. The sick man for many days had been quite a helpless invalid, and in his fever and delirium raved and talked of his past life in a way that indicated that the

poor man had gone through sad and bitter experiences. There was enough to tell Aunt Mary the sick man's life had been through thorny paths and full of sore troubles, for which reason he seemed anxious to hide his name and identity. There were days and nights when he lay entirely unconscious. Then came vague, misty feelings of one awaking from a long disturbed sleep, and the sick man awoke again to life and reason. He sat for hours in the deep shade of the eucalyptus trees, watching the white feathery clouds as they glimmered through the dense foliage which hung above his head. Strange, vague thoughts were flitting through his mind, of the coincidence that placed him where he now found himself, and his countenance was a study to behold. He rises and walks impatiently, up and down the garden walk. He looks about like one who is pursued; he walks hastily down under the boughs of the hanging trees, lifts his hat from his head, and looks up at the blue sky. Something like a prayer falls from his lips out into the silent air. With tender consideration Aunt Mary nursed him back to life and hope. He had been able to sit up in the sunshine for several

days, and today he had returned from what he called a grand survey of the country. He was now quite recovered. Early one morning Aunt Mary hurried to the sick man's room to give him some kind attention. What was her amazement to find the room empty and the stranger gone! On the table lay a letter to her, in which he said: "*Best and kindest of women: Do not think me ungrateful. Some time you will know why I left under cover of the night. Your charity and goodness have made a new man of me. The bread that you cast on the waters will some day return to you. How strange are the ways of Providence, that through the whimpering of a wounded dog I should be led back to the God of my youth! Thank God there are such women as you left in this sad old world! Accept the heartfelt gratitude of an unfortunate man.*"

Can you imagine Aunt Mary's sadness and surprise? Thus the stranger passed out of her life. Let us hope the impress of Aunt Mary's good, useful life and character were left upon him, and amid the strife and turmoil of the world he would carry this blessing with him. The days and the weeks slipped by, and Aunt Mary's life, as usual,



The Mission Priest

was full of good deeds and kindness to all who came within the radiance of her happy life. There are many souls like her in everyday life of whom the world knows nothing. What lessons they teach us — to be faithful in the homely duties of life, to bear patiently our crosses, and to have fervent trust in God's faithful doings with His children.

Antonio was such an apt scholar and such a clever lad, with the promise of perfected plans to send him to a college of the Vincentian Fathers in Los Angeles. And now we find Antonio happily settled at St. Vincent's College. His sturdy, noble bearing and manly character soon won for him the love and respect of pupils and teachers alike. He received special commendation from the head professor for proficiency in his studies and for his gentlemanly deportment. Antonio had fully repaid Aunt Mary for her motherly care bestowed upon him, as well as for her absolute confidence in him. Being a just and wise woman, she wished to give the Indian boy a chance to make his mark in the world. She knew that many white lads could not compete with him in his intelligent observa-

tion of men and things. He was wide awake to all that was going on in the busy world into which his college life had brought him. The nineteenth century discoveries and inventions were a continual source of wonder and amazement to him. Telegraphy and steam were a never-failing field for his investigating mind, and many were the crude contrivances he made with his own hands out of the odd materials that school-boys find ever at hand. He was helped in his work and encouraged in every way by the Fathers of the college, who saw in the young boy the promise of a vigorous and sturdy manhood. His intelligent and active mind dwelt on the wrongs and injustice of his race. He was proud to show the world what one of his race could achieve. He felt that he was honoring the brave and loyal chief whom he called father by being faithful to his church and its holy teachings, and again by making the most of this splendid opportunity that had come into his life, that of getting a Christian education at the hands of such efficient loyal sons of the church as the Vincentian Fathers. His teachers had marked and outlined a special line of studies for him when a sudden call

from Aunt Mary obliged him to leave the college. With a sad and disappointed heart he started for the old home, to learn that Aunt Mary was on the eve of quitting the old place and all its tender associations; in fact, that untoward circumstances were forcing her out of her possessions.

A fearful experience had come into the life of Aunt Mary. She had always been a woman of means, and as she looked over her broad acres she often said, "Well, there is enough and to spare." But one morning the day was darkened for poor Aunt Mary, and this comfortable old world seemed to rock and shake under her very feet. Strange documents and stranger legal phrases were read to her, telling her that her title to her land and her home was illegal, and that she was now homeless and must leave the place she loved so well. It was some time before she could really understand the import of it all; but as one by one the workmen of her ranch were leaving her, and a desolate and neglected look was settling down on her once thriving place, the dreaded reality faced her, and now she must look the fact in the face and act accordingly. It was a hard and bitter trial to find herself in old

age without a roof to call her own. The grotto with its most hallowed associations and every inch of ground were dear to her. It was like a death blow to Aunt Mary. She seemed like one dazed; hope died out of her life. It was really pathetic to see the once cheerful woman drooping like a withered flower. She sits at the western window, bathed in tears, and watching the strangely beautiful effects of the setting sun, she is plunged in grief and sorrow over her suddenly changed prospects. She seemed utterly incapable of action; she got up and walked around like a woman who had much to do but was doing it all in her sleep. The sun has dropped like a ball of fire in the tranquil waters of the ocean, and darkness settles down on her home and on her life. The hardest-borne trials are those which are never chronicled in any earthly record, but are suffered every day. Her face looked as if all the sorrows of the world had been crushed into it. Burying her head in her hands, she sobs and cries as if her very heart was breaking. Just as this dark cloud is hovering over his old home Antonio returns. His presence is like a cheery sunbeam in this desolate and dreary hour.

VI

THE morning of Easter Day is dawning pink on the white sandhills. The faintest flush of light shone on the peaks of San Carlos, which shut in the village of Saboba. As the light grows strong over the hills we can discern the adobe huts of the Indians. We hear the sounds of awakening day, and the sun comes up over the tops of the tall redwoods, lighting up the bunches of the red manzanita berries which lie near the fields of yellow mustard, beside clumps of brown chaparral. It is a scene to delight the heart and eye of an artist. As the sun comes over the mountains it throws its beams of burnished gold far over the old picturesque town of Capistrano. The birds are in the trees and in the hedges. Their songs well up in a glorious melody. The bells of the old mission church are sending their chimes of Easter gladness all over the surrounding country. People talk of the risen Christ and of that long-ago time when the dear Christ walked and talked with men, when the touch of His hand brought health to the sick and peace to

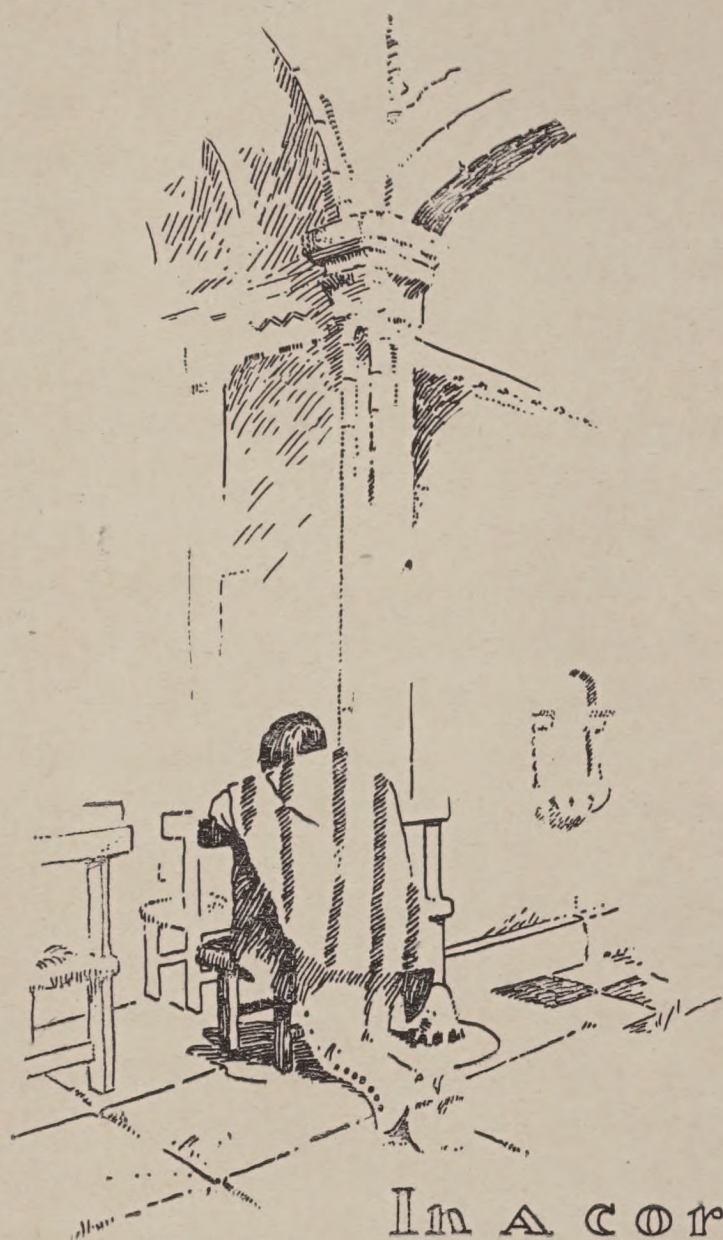
the sorrowing. Oh that we of today might have lived in that far-away time! The good Franciscan Fathers are doing all in their power to make this a glad Easter; there are flowers everywhere in the old church, such flowers as only southern California produces. Oh, the riotous blossoming of the lovely flowers everywhere in this land of glorious sunshine!

*“ The flowers look upward in every place
In this beautiful land of ours,
And dear as the smile on an old friend’s
face
Is the smile of the bright, bright flow-
ers.”*

On many squalid adobe huts the light of Easter dawned clear and bright. And the angels whispered words of hope and comfort to poor Aunt Mary, whose heart today was sad and lonely, and whose cross seemed greater than she could bear. As the old church bells ring out their gladness, the people are coming into the church in small groups from all over the hillsides. Aunt Mary and Antonio are slowly toiling over the old Indian trail on the hill. Her cheeks

were flushed and her timid eyes were brave and brilliant, like the eyes of one who had been on the Mount of Sorrows asking fate that awful question: Why are we mortals sorrowful? Though no outward circumstance could dim the radiance of her sunny soul, yet she was now unspeakably sad. The boy tries to divert her attention by speaking of the beautiful sunshiny day. To the Indian there is a divine message in the colors of the rising sun and a benediction in the notes of the rolling waters. He talks of the day and its meaning to the Catholic heart. She listens in an absent sort of a mood, and seems glad when they reach the door of the little church. The worshipers are not numerous; most of them are half-breeds, with some whites and Indians. In the nave of the church knelt a curiously mixed congregation. It is, indeed, a motley group that gathers in this little country church, but all are of one mind to honor the risen Christ, and over all shines the glorious Easter morning light. Antonio Cavai always got into a little corner by himself, in order to be more recollected, and there humbly kneeling, with his eyes cast down, he prayed with the most edifying fervor, and

with a devotion that we do not often see in some of the splendid cathedrals of our great country. When the priest held up the Sacred Host a holy trembling seized Antonio, his lip quivered, his face lighted up; he bows his head in love and adoration. Antonio's tender piety attracted to him the attention and esteem of the few Franciscan Fathers who were left at the old mission church, for was not Antonio Cavai a living witness of what the Catholic faith and the Fathers had done to uplift the Indian race? Father Franconi in a simple, quiet talk tells the listening, hungry souls of Christ's promises. His earnest words re-echo through the arches of the old church. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but Christ's words will never pass away. His promise is for you and for me," said the good padre. His tones floated, sweet, full, and thrilling, into the silent listeners' ears. "The words of Christ were ever full of hope and promise. 'Be of good cheer' was His counsel to the Apostles. Courage, dear ones, courage! The mists will rise and the dark night will pass. Trust the loving Saviour; trust Him through the darkness, and through the mists, up the hard ways, across



In A corner
by himself

the hills, and in the darkness of the night. There is no sorrow so bitter but the endeavor to heal another's wounds will sweeten it; there are many bitter sorrows, but hidden somewhere is a lasting peace." This came like a personal message to Aunt Mary, as she sat with bowed head and an aching heart, looking for light where all seemed dark. The padre stands on the quaint old altar and gives to the kneeling people his parting blessing, and they separate for their respective homes with the peace of God shining on their happy faces.

As Antonio and Aunt Mary emerge from the portals of the old church they are accosted by a strange gentleman, who, with hat in hand, respectfully addresses Aunt Mary: "Do you not know me, Mrs. O'Donovan? Look at me, dear, kind woman. Do you not remember the sick man you nursed and cared for three summers ago? I am he." Aunt Mary was indeed surprised, and held out her hand in greeting. "You brought me back," said he, "not only to health, but back to the God of my youth, and to a life of honesty and integrity, and back to the church of my youth. I have come out of my way a good many miles to hear Mass this

morning, and here by chance I have met you, though I was on my way to seek you. I have much, my good woman, to say to you and can hardly wait to reach your home. I must talk to you alone. I have a confession to make to you, which Antonio's young, innocent ears must not hear. Your kindness, dear woman, and the example of this faithful little Indian boy have made me once more a good Catholic. I was brought up by a careful mother in the Catholic faith, but fell away from the church in my careless manhood." "Well, well," said Aunt Mary, "I never expected to see you again." "It was only after many delays," said the stranger, "that I got here at last. It seemed as if the fates were against my ever getting here to look on your good, honest face again." "Ah," sighed Aunt Mary, "I have fallen on sad, sad days since you were last here." They had now reached the door of the once happy home. The neglected and cheerless look on the once thriving place had not escaped the stranger's eyes. As they sit together in the well-remembered little sitting-room, the stranger is greatly affected by all the thoughts that come surging through his brain. "I feel," said he,

“like bending my knees to you, for your kind, womanly nature and good Catholic heart have been the cause of my turning from an unscrupulous, scheming man of the world into an honest, decent fellow. Let me tell you, dear Mrs. O'Donovan, the very day you took me into your house I had ridden down on my horse from San Luis Rey to make a survey of land which I with others had purchased, which included your fine ranch. We had intended driving all the settlers off the land. You know it does not need much of a legal quibble for land-grabbers to get possession here in Southern California. I know,” said the stranger, “we cannot balance life with money, but I want to do what is just and right to make up for what you have done for me. You see, Mrs. O'Donovan, how God has taken care of you. Not one inch of your land shall be taken from you. Here are your legal papers, all signed and recorded and settled by order of the court. It has taken me some time to undo the injustice we had attempted, but, buying off the other men, I have succeeded in securing your place for you free from all incumbrances.”

Tears of joy and gratitude fill Aunt

Mary's eyes. She cannot speak; she can only offer him her hand, which he reverently kisses. "My leaving so hastily in the night," said the stranger, "seemed ungrateful, but at midnight I remembered that day was an important date which closed up the matters in the courts; there was no way but to meet the northbound cars at Carlsbad, at three o'clock in the morning. I was in a perfect frenzy of mind when I found out that the very woman I was going to rob and plunder was treating me like an angel, and had saved my life. It seemed a fitting thing for me to hide myself under cover of the night. The remembrance of that little Indian boy's prayer, there alone in the woods, is something never to be forgotten, and your goodness and tenderness has followed me like a benediction from my dead mother's grave. There is no knowing what might have become of me but for you and Antonio. Coming forth from this struggle I felt like one regenerated, and I, who for years had neglected the duties of my church, went at once to confession as soon as I got to Los Angeles. It would be impossible to tell you of my struggles, and of the peace of mind I now have." "My good brother," said

Aunt Mary, "you have been ungrateful towards your God in having rejected His love in the sacraments of His church, but surely He has given you great proofs of His mercy and watchful care." "When I think," said the stranger, "of my haughty character, its avarice and greed, it is marvelous what God has done for me."

In the silence and hush of the evening the stranger told Aunt Mary the story of his life, which was indeed strange and startling. Antonio was called into the privacy of their conversation, and was told the astonishing news that the stranger was a man of wealth, and that he had come to do all that money and a grateful heart could do to make happy and contented the lives of those who were instrumental in saving him from death and starvation by the roadside, and leading him back to the God of his youth. At first Antonio could not understand it all, but like a flash he remembered that now all his prayers to our Blessed Mother *were answered*. The good that he had so fervently prayed for was now dawning upon them.

*“ Pray, though the gift you ask for
May never comfort your fears,
May never repay your longings,
Yet pray and with hopeful tears;
An hour, not that you long for,
But diviner, will come some day.
Your eyes are too dim to see it,
Yet watch, and wait, and pray.”*

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